Conference Abstract

# How about Habitats and Darwin Core?

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## Abstract

As part of the Biodiversity Information System on Nature and Landscapes (SINP), the French National Museum of Natural History was appointed to develop biodiversity data exchange standards, with the goal of sharing French marine and terrestrial data nationally, meeting domestic and European requirements, e.g., the Infrastructure for spatial information in Europe Directive (INSPIRE Directive, European Commission 2007). Data standards are now recognised as useful to improve and share biodiversity knowledge (e.g., species distribution) and play a key role in data valorisation (e.g., vulnerability assessment, conservation policy). For example, in order to fulfill report obligations within the Fauna and Flora Habitats Directive (European Commission 1992), and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (European Commission 2008), information about taxa and habitat occurrences are required periodically, involving data exchange and compilation at a national scale. National and international data exchange standards are focused on species, and only a few solutions exist when there is a need to deal with habitat data. Darwin Core has been built to fit with species data exchange needs and only contains one habitat attribute that allows for a bit of leeway to have such an information transfer, but is deemed to be one of the least standardized fields. However, Darwin Core does not allow for a transit of only habitat data, as the scientific name of the taxon is mandatory.

The SINP standard for habitats was developed by a dedicated working group, representative of biodiversity European Commission 2008 stakeholders in France. This standard focuses on core attributes that characterize habitat observation and monitoring. Interoperability remains to be achieved with the Darwin Core standard, or something

similar on a world scale (e.g., Humboldt Core), as habitat data are regularly gathered irrespective of whether taxon occurrences are associated with it.

The results of the French initiative proved useful to compile and share data nationally, bringing together data providers that otherwise would have been excluded. However, at a global scale, it faces some challenges that still need to be fully addressed, interoperability being the main one. Regardless of the problems that remain to be solved, some lessons can be learnt from this effort. With the ultimate goal of making biodiversity data readily available, these lessons should be kept in mind for future initiatives.

The presentation deals with how this work was undertaken and how the required elements could be integrated into a French national standard to allow for comprehensive habitat data reporting. It will show hypothesis as to what could be added to the Darwin Core to allow for a better understanding of habitats with at least one taxon attached (or not) to them.

## Keywords

standardisation, taxon, occurrence, habitat

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## Presented at

Biodiversity_Next 2019

## Author contributions

Noëmie Michez/Rémy Poncet : marine concepts for habitats, and general concepts for habitats

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